



YOU FIRST PROGRAM, WALKING MEETING

Help Employees Get Daily Physical Activity

WHY this is important

People who are more physically active have a reduced risk of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer. Physical activity also supports emotional health and stress reduction. All of these benefits contribute to a happier and more productive employee, which can save an organization money.

It is important to consider the diverse physical abilities of employees, and to make sure that any physical activity program is inclusive of employees with disabilities. Employees should be encouraged or required to consult with a physician and/or sign a consent form before beginning any exercise program offered at a workplace.

HOW to support this outcome

Education and Awareness:

- Promote daily physical activity breaks.
- Build wellness activities into events.
- Offer incentives for active commuting.
- Create a physical activity challenge.
- Offer incentives for participating in physical activities.
- Enter local fitness activities, such as 5K fun runs, as a company team.
- Include family members in activities that promote physical activity.

On-Site Support:

- Offer on-site fitness opportunities.
- Provide space to be physically active.
- Start a bike or snowshoe sharing program.
- Provide fitness equipment on-site for employees to use.
- Support physical activity breaks and active meetings (e.g. walking meetings).
- Use signs, prompts and create “inviting” stairwells to encourage the use of stairs.
- Provide maps of trails or walking paths in the area.
- Provide discounts for fitness classes, gyms or health clubs.
- Make sure on-site supports are available for employees of all physical abilities, providing adaptive equipment and opportunities.

Policy Change:

- Develop a wellness break policy.
- Adopt a physical activity policy.
- Create guidelines for flexible work schedules to allow physical activity.

WHERE to go for resources

- Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation area maps and trails: fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/trail-maps-and-guides
- “Take the Stairs!” signs: www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/worksite-pa/toolkits/stairwell/motivational_signs.htm
- Active Commuting Resources:
 - Go! Vermont: www.connectingcommuters.org
 - Local Motion: www.localmotion.org
- Races and Physical Activity Challenges in Vermont:
 - Run Vermont: www.runvermont.org/event-calendar
 - Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness & Sports and Vermont Corporate Cup: vermontfitness.org
 - Vermont Senior Games: www.vermontseniorgames.org
 - Come Alive Outside Physical Activity Challenges: comealiveoutside.com
- Vermont 2-1-1 (dial 2-1-1)

Toolkit ▶ *Sample Physical Activity Policy Template*

For more info ▶ The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office near you: www.healthvermont.gov/local.